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TCS-13905-62
Dated 24 Oct

21 October 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance of Cuba

Following is a chronological resume of considerations by the Special Group (5412) and the Special Group (Augmented) of U-2 reconnaissance activities over Cuba. This summary begins as of 1 May 1961 (i.e. after the Bay of Pigs)

11 May 1961. It was agreed that policy approval for U-2 flights over Cuba is still in effect.

1 February 1962. The Cuba missions were stepped up from one per month to two.

14 June 1962. A COMOR recommendation that two additional flights be authorized for June was approved by the Group.

12 July 1962. (Augmented Group) Mr. McCona emphasized that reconnaissance of Cuba has developed complete information on deployment and facilities for the Army, Navy and Air Force, and that it has verified the fact that there is sufficient logistic support for a 75 000 man military force. No missile sites have been found.

12 July 1962. The Group agreed to continue with the presently-authorized schedule of two flights per month.

19 July 1962. Cuba was considered as part of a set of proposals covering reconnaissance world-wide. The two flights per month pattern was reiterated. (This was later approved by higher authority.)

9 August 1962. The Group agreed that the second mission authorized for August should be flown ~~when~~ the DCI decides that the immediate situation with respect to Soviet materiel justifies it. It was noted that this would use up existing authorizations for August and if a third mission should become necessary later in the month, it should be considered on its merits at that time.

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30 August 1962. In connection with the Agency's monthly forecast, General Carter mentioned that there might be an additional requirement for flights over Cuba.

11 September 1962. At a special meeting attended by the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Acting DCI and others, the Secretary expressed concern over the Agency's planned coverage of Cuba. He objected particularly to the proposal to combine extensive overflying of international waters with actual overflights. As a result of this discussion, it was agreed that the Agency's proposed coverage would have to be broken into four parts - one over the Isle of Pines, one over the western end of Cuba, and two legs along the coast - one north and one south. Within this framework, higher authority later gave approval for three flights in addition to those already authorized, with priority to the overflights. (Note: The Agency later secured agreement to continue the Isle of Pines leg over the Bay of Pigs area, after considerable negotiation with State.)

14 September 1962. A JCS representative outlined the capabilities for low-level coverage of certain targets in Cuba. It was noted that the Secretary of Defense did not wish this operation considered further until the results of Agency reconnaissance in the same area became available. General Carter said that special efforts will be required to identify certain installations, the nature of which is not clear at present.

27 September 1962. An additional mission for Cuba was approved.

4 October 1962 (Augmented Group). The DCI pointed out that the Agency is now restricted to using the U-2 in the southeastern quadrant of Cuba, because of the SAM sites. It was questioned whether this was a reasonable restriction at this time, particularly since the SAMs were almost certainly not operational.

9 October 1962 (Augmented Group). The Group discussed the spectrum of possible reconnaissance activities. It was agreed that first priority should be given to one U-2 in the western part of the island. Depending on the results of this, a number of similar sorties might be mounted. (Higher authority later approved the one mission, leaving the second proposition open.)

15 October 1962. At a special meeting two U-2 missions, designed to cover all of Cuba, were approved. These were concurred in by higher authority.

After the 15th of October, additional coverage was agreed on at other meetings. The Special Group was not convened for this purpose.

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